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# Navy Medicine Celebrates National Lab Week

Filed under FORCE HEALTH AND SAFETY, HOSPITALS, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (NO COMMENTS)

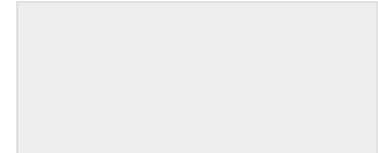
By Lt. J.G. Fae L DeForrest, MSC, USN, Department of Pathology, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center



Lee Evans, medical technologist, Clinical Microscopy, technical supervisor, WRNMMC, performing manual differential. The blood differential test measures the percentage of each type of white blood cell (WBC) that you have in your blood. It also reveals if there are any abnormal or immature cells. (Photo courtesy of Lt. J.G. Fae DeForrest)

In honor of celebrating the 38th annual Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (April 22-26) I thought it would be a perfect opportunity to learn about laboratory professionals. Who are we? Usually located in the basement of medical facilities, we tend to be forgotten about. Of course when there is a problem, we are found.

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week originated in 1975 as National Medical Laboratory Week, or NMLW, under the auspices of the American Society for Medical Technology, now called the [American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science \(ASCLS\)](#).



NMLW is sponsored by more than 13 societies and organizations. The role that the laboratory plays in patient care is a very important one. The medical team relies on the testing results for their patients'

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Mr. Ethny Obas, WRNMMC, performing Blood Chemistry Testing. Chemistry Screen is a blood test that measures the level of substances in the blood (such as electrolytes). It serves as an aid to the physician about the general health condition of the patients, help look for certain problems, and finds out whether treatment for a specific problem is working. (Photo courtesy of Lt. J.G. Fae L DeForrest)

course of treatment. The laboratory, along with other ancillary departments is essential in quality health care. According to ASCLS, there are approximately 300,000 practitioners of clinical laboratory science in the United States.

At [Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda](#), we have many different missions within the department which include: specimen collection and accessioning, surgical pathology, cytopathology, autopsy pathology, infectious disease testing, transfusion services, blood donor center collection and screening, and clinical and reference lab testing. More than three million reportable tests are done per year here in our labs at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda.

For more information about Laboratory Professionals and how to become one please visit American Society of Clinical Pathology’s website at [www.ascp.org](http://www.ascp.org). Another resource that is available for further information is [www.CAP.org](http://www.CAP.org).

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